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## **THE ROLE OF UNIVERSITY IN SMART CITY DEVELOPMENT**

*Abstract:*

### **Purpose:**

Universities are the main actors in the process of knowledge creation (Castells and Hall, 1994) and their location in the territory is a key prerequisite for economic and social, as well as smart development (OECD, 1999, Holland 2001, Etkowitz, 2002). Universities unite potential in one place, creating the so-called creative center, which is the center of developing territory (Florida, Gates, Knudsen, Stolarick 2006, p. 20). They are also a part of the innovation potential of the area (Holland, 2001 Etkowitz, 2002 Mille, 2004, Florida, 2006, Vaňová, 2006). According the important role of universities in spatial development, the aim of the paper is to explain the specifics of their role in the smart spatial development as one of the newest trends in regions and cities.

### **Design:**

In the first part of the paper, it is explained the interconnection between the smart cities development and universities and research institutions from the theoretical point of view. Then it continues by the situation critical analysis of city Banská Bystrica regarding the main characteristics of smart cities (people, living, environment, governance, mobility) and subsequently it is focused on the importance of universities (4 universities in city with 80000 people) in the systematic smart development of Banská Bystrica.

The paper is concluded by the identified challenges of future smart development in this city.

**Methodology:**

The paper is based on the results of several researches and surveys in spatial development of Banská Bystrica. The main sources of primary data are the questionnaire survey with citizens and interviews with the representatives of city. To the secondary data belong the statistics of Slovak Statistical Office, Eurostat, the published results on “European Smart Cities” ranking, which was elaborated by Vienna University of Technology (Centre of Regional Science) in 2007 and revised for the specific requirements of the PLEEC project financed by 7th Framework Programme aimed on evaluation and benchmarking of smart, or potentially smart city profiles.

**Implications:**

Following the results of the research and their comparison with the theoretical framework the starting points of methodology how to build smart Banská Bystrica is proposed (definition of key actors, weaknesses and strengths of building smart city, responsibilities, etc.). The concept of methodology will be processed by the authors into the complex strategy how to build smart city.

*Keywords:*

Smart city, development, Banská Bystrica, university, strategy